The Saturday Gazette.

BLOOMFIELD AND MONTCLAIR.

WILLIAM P. LYON, Editor and Proprietor. CHARLES M. DAVIS, Associate Editor. OFFICE, Bloomfield, N. J.

AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY JOURNAL OF LITERATURE, EDUCATION, GENERAL NEWS AND LOCAL INTERESTS. $2.00 A YEAR—IN ADVANCE

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THE

SATURDAY GAZETTE,

BLOOMFIELD AND MONTCLAIR.

BELLEVILLE, CALDWELL AND VERONA.

AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY JOURNAL OF LITERATURE, EDUCATION, POLITICS, GENERAL NEWS, AND ESPECIALLY OF LOCAL INTERESTS.

All PUBLIC and LOCAL questions, including political and social, sanitary and reformatory, educational and industrial topics, will be clearly presented and fully and fairly discussed.

It is intended and expected to make it not only acceptable and interesting to the general reader, but of special value to citizens of Essex county and of real importance to every resident of Bloomfield, Montclair Caldwell, Belleville and Verona.

Nothing will be admitted to its columns that is unworthy of cordial welcome to every family circle.

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BLOOMFIELD, NOV. 28, 1874.

REV. H. SPELLMEYER, Dear Sir: The undersigned, having, in common with hundreds of our fellow citizens, listened with great pleasure and satisfaction to your recent Thanksgiving discourse before the united congregations of our village, and believing that the more extended dissemination of its valuable thoughts will conduce to the best interests of religion, morality and good citizenship, respectfully request that you will furnish a copy of the same to be published in the SATURDAY GAZETTE next week, in order that it may be in a convenient form for distribution as well as for home preservation.

Signed:

Joseph A. Davis, J. F. Sanxay, D. B. Coe, Thos. W. Langstroth, W. K. Williamson, E. A. Bliss, E. H. Chambers, E. Maclarlan, E. W. Page, Horace Pierson, Jason Crane, D. G. Garabrant, J. Banks Reford, Jacob F. Randolph, Thomas McGowan.

BLOOMFIELD, Dec. 1, 1874.

To Dr. J. A. Davis, Hon. J. F. Sanxay, Rev. Dr. Coe and others.

GENTLEMEN—Your request for a copy of my Thanksgiving Sermon for publication in our village GAZETTE I feel to be more complimentary than its merits warrant.—Being unexpectedly called upon and at short notice to preach on this occasion, my preparation was hurried and unsatisfactory to myself; but submitting to your judgment that its usefulness may be extended, I place it at your disposal for that purpose.

Respectfully, H. SPELLMEYER.

A SERMON

DELIVERED ON THANKSGIVING DAY, NOV. 26, 1874, IN THE WESTMINSTER CHURCH, BLOOMFIELD, N. J., BEFORE THE UNITED CONGREGATIONS OF PRESBYTERIAN, BAPTIST AND METHODIST CHURCHES, BY REV. HENRY SPELLMEYER, PASTOR OF THE M. E. CHURCH. *Published by request.*

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me"?—*Psalm*, CXVI., 12.

It is probable that we are not all agreed in our definition of a Thanksgiving sermon. Some, who forbid politics in the Pulpit, think it gives a Preacher an opportunity to pelt the civil magistracy, to present lugubrious apprehensions concerning the Executive policy, to boast or to complain of the condition and prospects of national affairs in general, and to indulge a good deal in what Jeremy Taylor calls "the liberty of prophesying." Others think it should bear the same relation to the year that an index does to a book. It should tell what has happened—how,—and why? and, of course, it should be long, dry, and—a bore!

Thanksgiving Day is a day for giving thanks. We need sermons to day that shall kindle in us a spirit of thanksgiving. There is one peril which threatens our national prosperity, above all others. It is that indifference to our mercies which may induce God to withhold them. And it is my purpose to speak of the Lord's benefits to us as a nation, and as individuals—not of all, for they are like the stars in multitude—but of enough, we trust, to produce a cheerful, thankful temper—praying that while we cannot render an adequate, we may a sufficient compensation for all his benefits toward us.

This is an American day, and one of our Yankee ideas. True! many national Thanksgivings are recorded in history. I recall that on the shores of the Red Sea commemorating the escape of the children of Israel from the fury of Pharaoh and of mighty waters—"typical of the time when the followers of the Lamb shall shout their triumphal chorus on the sea of glass." I recall the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles—a thanksgiving not only for ancestral favors, but for the ingathering of the harvest—when in booths erected in the open air, whole families gathered together before the Lord. Great victories have occasioned such a festival. After the victory of the Black Prince eight days of solemn thanksgivings were observed in England; after the battle of Cressy, Edward the Third commanded all boasting to cease and issued orders that men should go to their knees, after the Spanish Armada, which threatened both liberty and Protestantism, was destroyed by a storm at sea, England had a national Thanksgiving, and Queen Elizabeth directed that a medal should be struck, bearing the inscription, "*Afflavit Deus. et dissipantur.*"

But with us it is a Yearly Festival. It is not a day to celebrate any special victory or deliverance. It is not a Saint's day. George Washington is the only saint yet honored with a legal holiday in our calendar. It is not an anniversary day, as the Fourth of July. It is rather a Festival of the Home. It is a day when by civil authority we are urged to say our prayers. America is that much Christian anyway—for twenty-four hours once a year she stands still before the altar to offer incense to the Almighty.

In the proclamation for the observance of this Day I find a clearer recognition of Divine Providence than there used to be. Twenty years ago these words formed a part of a Proclamation: "Nothing can be lost by recognizing the obligations which we owe to the Supreme Being—by it much may be gained." The magistrate is not very sure about it, but sagely concludes that to pray and feel thankful cannot do much harm. The words of our President have a clearer ring—"I, Ulysses S. Grant, do recommend to all citizens to assemble in their respective places of worship, and express their thanks for the mercy and favor of Almighty God, and observe such day as a day of rest, thanksgiving and prayer."

In compliance with this request, I call your attention first to those benefits God has heaped upon us as a nation, for which we should devoutly thank Him!

To America, as to few nations, He has given the opportunity of greatness. A quarter of a century ago Thomas Carlyle said America was an experimont. And it was in the sense that some of our fundamental ideas were untried. But to-day, the world knows it is an experiment no longer.

Our situation has conduced to our prosperity. No feudal or despotic lands touch us, and cannot, for God has isolated us by oceans. It has not been the forts along the coasts, that have preserved our peace, so much as the billows that dash against them. Had Rome been nearer our bold attacks, might have stirred up strife. Had we been nearer to Asia, her greedy maw might have devoured us. The English Lion and the American Eagle might have done more than roar and snap eyes at each other, had there been no cold Atlantic between them. God has laid out America for peace and prosperity among the nations—I might say eternally decreed, "that peace shall be within her walls and prosperity within her palaces"—but that could not be, for we went to fighting among ourselves.

No great devastation has laid us low. We have not been destroyed by water or by fire. No such dreadful pestilence as the Old World knows of has come to us. Parts of our country have been scourged by disease, parts ravaged by flame, parts inundated by flood, parts devoured by flying creatures, but no general calamity, but one, has ever come upon us, and that like a storm in midsummer, though dreadful while it lasted, has cleansed and sweetened us. When the West has cried out, the East has been able to go to the rescue!

The physical geography of our land encourages science. We have a field to which we can send almost any scientist to pursue his studies. We have Michigan with ores and minerals; the States of the South with plants and flowers; and caves and mountains full of treasures. We have prairies to run rails over, great mountains to tunnel, and great rivers to bridge. America is a *Natural* University where we can take up any branch of learning. Rich in every science are we, except archæology but give us time and we will be in that.

God has placed us alone, but He has also given us the ability to live alone. We need not go to Australia for gold and silver; nor to Austria for quicksilver; nor to Wales for coal; nor to Italy for Petrolecm. The mountains of Colorado are full of gold, and Idaho and Montana gleam with it. Pennsylvania is one vast coal bed, west of the Mississippi we can scoop up quicksilver and as for Petroleum, we have a subterranean ocean of it!

Now remember that Israel was scattered among the mountains of Palestine; that "Italy is crammed down into the bootleg of Europe," that Greece is anchored like a fleet in the Aegean; that most nations are near geographically other nations, that are greedy and troublous, and perhaps we will agree with Dr. Joseph Parker, in the Nonconformist of London, "America has a magnificent future, and in my opinion is on the point of laying her hand on the supremacy of the world."

By many it is thought that our natural attractions may work an injury. The Old World is entering the New—not with muskets and cannon, but with what many dread as much.

There is an annual deposit which comes to us, as to the regions near the Delta of the Mississippi, gathered almost from every degree of latitude. Some call it mud, and say it breeds miasm. There is miasm in it, but in intelligence, in a free government, and in a free gospel, there is a sunlight which will sweeten it, and produce a fertile soil out of which will grow an imperial civilization.

The German comes to us. He has loose ideas of the Sabbath, and if he could, would change it into a season of bibulous hilarity. The Chinaman comes. He will work for about nothing, and so depreciates the value of labor. The Irishman comes with muscle and a more loyal devotion to the Pope than to the President. Emigration is bringing to us a muddy mass of superstition, idolatry and discord. We are importing vast material for a spiritual warfare. The old landmarks are being washed away. Law, the Bible, the Christian Sabbath do not mean as much as they once did More superstition comes to us than religion; more muscle, than brain—and there is reason to be alarmed, at least watchful lest the mingling of these strange materials may produce strife and anarchy. But there is another side. The deposit of the receding Nile is the richest soil of Egypt, after the sunlight purifies it, and may not this deposit of the Old World be to us a rich treasure? We have room enough for it. The undeveloped West seems to have been designed for log cabins. We have work enough for the foreigner. If he is a farmer, we will almost give him a farm; if a miner, we have mines glittering with metal waiting for his pick; if a laborer, we have bridges to build, and mountains to tunnel; if he has brains, we pay as well for them as any people do under heaven. We have resources enough. We have coal enough, and farm land enough, and wool enough. To every stranger who steps on our shores, I would say: "We are glad to see you! Either you will do us good by your head or your hands, or we are bound to do you good, and so hem you in by intelligence and religion that you must be a good citizen! And in either case we are glad you came!"

But there is a two-fold danger. Immigration may produce disintegration. We have had one civil war, Secession came from the South, next time it may come from the West. Once the West feels an ability to stand alone, the West—not as it is to-day, but as it is becoming by the influx of new customs, new creeds may seize the opportunity, and the East must make it to be the interest of the West, and the North must make it to be the interest of the South, to maintain a national unity. Then too intelligence must be diffused. The muscle that comes, must be supplemented by brain. We want a school and a church to follow every emigrant train We want lectures on Agriculture, on Social and Political science not by harlequins, but by the ablest men of America, to the workingmen of America.

The church should be alive. The gospel if it has run, now like the angel in the Apocalypce it should fly. Printing presses are mighty fortresses! Newspapers are better than bullets. Let them give us less murder and more morals and many bullets may be saved! Let there be a National Tract Society which shall scatter intelligence not concerning religion only, but upon all good subjects, free and broad cast through the land!

Of the other danger, I will speak subsequently.

2. The second National benefit which should evoke gratitude is our American idea of Freedom.

Freedom means to us more than to other nations. It has cost us more. Our liberty is more comprehensive and universal.

Our ballot box is free. Any citizen black or white, may drop in his vote, and it does just as much to elect, and to dethrone, as the vote of any other citizen, no matter what his station. Religion is free. Our fore fathers came here to find religious freedom, and we mean that it shall be preserved. Pere Hyacinthe dared to do what? To deny Papal Infallibility? No! To deny transubstantiation? No! He dared to say "I have my own religious convictions, and I dare differ from every man who dares to differ from me" That is treason across the water. It is religious liberty in America. Here every man is a Pope, and the church is not a list of dusty dogmas, but of human souls that have Christ in them the hope of glory. Not only is religion free, but every office is free. Do you want to be President of the United States? You may be! Fulfill two conditions and you may be! first be a *man*, a citizen of America, and then—*get there!* And what child rich or poor, but has heard it said of him, "be a good boy and you may be President sometime."

That is to say in this land, while many inequalities exist at the start, any man may rise higher than every other man, if he can—no matter how low down he was when he began to rise!

I will illustrate this thought by our Public School system.

The Free School is often looked upon as a place to grind out and to grind up scholars. It is a place to grind out American citizens. It is where we teach Democratic equality. It brings the boys of the rich and the poor together on one level, and then says." Now, boys, Go! It is, not the rich boy, or the poor boy, but the *best* boy that wins!" The Public school says to every boy who knocks for admission—"It is of no account where you came from." You are going to be an American citizen. I propose to give you a chance to get to the highest round of citizenship, not by keeping down some one else, or by aiding you more than another, but by giving you an equal chance with every other boy." And the schoolmaster forms his classes. He grades his school according to the intelligence of the scholars. Tom Smith the hodcarriers son, and Augustus Primrose the aristocrat stand for the first time elbow to elbow, and Smith is below, not because he is poor, but because S comes after P. They study the same lessons, they conjugate the same verb, and when Augustus dont know his lesson, and Tom does—why the smart boy goes to the head and the dunce goes to the foot. And this lesson that the Public school teaches, that Dunces must go down, and Smart men must go up, is a fundamental idea of American liberty.

Now I say it is political wisdom that the common school should be well sustained. The school tax, should be the last tax to grumble about. The teachers should be the best money can secure. We want *uncommon* teachers for our common schools. Cheap teachers are always dear. More! we want *uncommon* teachers *and uncommon* schools. I hope the day will come when no Academy, no private school, will give as good advantages as the Public school, so that children who are arrogant and Popish shall mix with those that are humble and unpretentious, and learn that here we are not born kings and queens, but we earn our titles.

Perhaps manhood is not the standard yet. We had had rogues in office—*a few.* Often those who ought to be in positions of honor, are not. But they shall be Good men shall sit upon the bench, good men shall make our laws, good men shall govern us! Party shall go down and good men shall go up! This month Prof. Seelye of Amherst colllege was elected to Congress. He is a scholarly christian. How was he elected? "He was not a candidate. His name came before the people without his consent. No caucus manager approached him." He was elected because the people believed in his character and capability. It cost Prof. Seelye, just three cents. And that he turned over to his country in a Postage Stamp. And this is a token of the day coming when men shall be elected, because they are worthy.

To hasten this day good men must go to the polls. Rogues always do, and go often. Pythagoras once said "Abstine a fabis!" (abstain from beans) He referred not to our article of food, but to *beans*, black and white, used as ballots. Too many good men abstain from beans on Election Day. And it is a sacred duty with every good citizen to do all he can to elect good men, and to defeat bad men.

3. But again, we are a Christian People and that calls for devout Thanksgiving. Strictly speaking we are not purely christian, yet that is the direction in which we are moving. Were not Pagan nor especially Rationalistic—though we may be worldly and may worship Mammon."

The aim of our laws and of our government is more in agreement with than in opposition to God and the Bible, and the Lord means that we shall be a Christian Nation. We have the possibility. God's Word is not bound; Every man may go to the fountain himself for the truth. The minds of the people are not fettered by superatition, but prepared by education for the Gospel.

We have the benefit of all great discoveries and inventions. There is wealth enough among the rich, to send the Gospel to the poor, and not only the ability, thank God! but the disposition. God is giving us the opportunity of becoming a Christian People. Usually the Lord does all he can to save a man, and then says," go to Macedonia and tell the story of the cross!" But God has done everything to save us, and now brings Macedonia to us The Lord is importing Paganism and irreligion to America to be christianized. China and Japan are coming in by the Golden Gate on the West, and Germany and Ireland are entering on the East. They say they come here for work, for homes for liberty. God says, they are coming to America to be converted to Christ. As you to day have come from many directions, to this place of worship, so the church of America is being filled with men of all colors, and habits and creeds, from all parts of the earth, to hear the Gospel. And never had a nation such an opportunity to christianize as ours, to-day.

But during the process of evangelizing there are dangers. Already the fight rages over the Bible, or rather over a particular version of it. We see the omens of trouble. Already our Sabbaths are losing their sanctity. Parks, saloons, beer gardens, theatres swarm on the Lord's day. The different sects are clashing against each other. And to-day the great problem is, so to harmonize the elements we have that they shall all work together for the glory of God and the good of men.

We hear of two projects. One party says—"Legislate! This is a Christian land! Let us tell the world so!" And they would recognize God in the Constitution, and keep the Bible in the school by statute. Intemperance should go down by law, and a proper Sabbath observance should be compulsory. Another party says—Create a strong Christian sentiment! Make the pulpits strong! Build up the Sunday School! Scatter the Bible, and the Tract! Intelligence and the Gospel are mightier than all that can be against us!"

What is law! It is the sentiment of the people, *or should be.* Law and moral sentiment differ not in nature, but in point of time. The law does not create the sentiment. Public sentiment creates the law. Law is a dead letter unless the people back it. Now while legislation may help to suppress intemperance, Sabbath desecration, and the like, it will not and cannot do it alone. It is not the first thing. These vexing questions cannot be settled by legal enactments. Public sentiment is not deep enough or decided enough to make such laws worth much if we had them. We, the Christian people, must hold distinct views, and live up to them. We must meet foreigners with an example so pure and religious that they shall feel out of place until they conform to it. We must make our lives an awful contrast to theirs—living epistles "known and read of all men." This is an age of attrition, of division, of adjustment. The age of harmony and unity is not yet.

America is an instrument which the Lord means to use to send over the world the sweet strains of the Gospel. The wires and keys are not adjusted yet. Now the discord—by and by the music. We the Christian people must keep in time, and give no uncertain sound, that by the contrast harmonizing shall be easier.

II.—Passing now from those benefits peculiar to us as a nation, I come to speak of those peculiar to us as individuals. The discontented man will find nothing to thank God for to-day. I suppose to him, Thanksgiving is a grotesque idea. He will say, we cannot thank God for plenty,—off in Nebraska they famish, in New York, many beg their meals,—nor yet for wealth, —the money-making power is paralyzed,—nor for peace, Louisiana is in a state of suppressed revolution, nor yet for intelligence,—we are a stupid lot of folks! And so he will carve his turkey, and drink from his glass, with less thankfulness than the towl he eats had, for every time a towl takes a sip of water, it lifts up its head to the skies, as if in gratitude. Mr. Carlyle says with more sense and religion that a man should put himself at zero, and then reckon every degree ascending from that point, as an occasion for thanks. His is the Biblical idea. We are unworthy of the least of God's mercies. And instead of having nothing, we have everything to thank God for.

1. Consider some of the ordinary benefits of life. The greatest marvels in the universe are apt to pass unnoticed. And instead of pointing out to you what Jeremy Taylor calls "the great constellations of God's goodness," let me mention some things which fail to strike us because of their commonness. This morning we awoke, and lo! we had slept. Few know what it is to lie awake night after night, with the eye-balls hot, hard and throbbing, until you feel as if madness were coming on. But—"we laid us down and slept, we awaked, for the Lord sustained us.

The first thing we saw was the light of day. Homer and Milton knew how to value that. We do not. "Truly the light is sweet." Yes, but first the sun must be darkened before we can measure its sweetness. And the first thing we felt was air. Perhaps we tried hard to shut it out, but come it would like an angel to fan fevered brows, and to furnish fuel for the flame of life. And we had clothes to put on. Clothing made by the stitch, stitch, of some poor girl, maybe, with fingers well nigh worn off at the tips, and with life well nigh worn out. God who clothes the lilies, has somehow, given us enough to wear. And there was food upon our table. Perhaps at times we have scarcely known where it would come from—but still somehow the same hand that brings food to the sparrows, has not forgotten to bring ours. And we were well. Scores of times have we said this, now what does it mean? It means that we have that for which if we had it not we would make every exertion, and spend any sum of money, and take any voyage or medicine. It means that this delicate harp of a thousand strings which we call health has been so mercifully preserved by our Father, that no string has snapped even gotten out of tune. And reason had not left her throne. We had the use of our limbs, and our senses. We were surrounded by our family. Now these are ordinary mercies, but they are as truly marvels as the extraordinary. Ordinary mercies are daily mercies, constant, unwavering. Extraordinary mercies are the breaks in the common course of Providence, and by the sparkle of the one we become sensible of the occurrence of the other.

2. Consider some of those things often unnumbered among our benefits. We are apt to confound benefits with advantages. A benefit is that which does us good; an advantage is that which lifts us forward. Now it is often a benefit to go backward. And in rendering thanks to God to-day we must count in our seeming failures, as well as our actual successes.

It is a benefit to many to be poor. Everyone here who has made earnest, honest endeavors to get rich, who has been prudent and saving, if he has failed, hi poverty is a blessing to him. Perhaps if you had been rich, you might have lost your character, or your conscience, or your health, or your happiness. And when you prayed:—"O Lord, make me rich! Give me land and stocks! I won't allow them to corrupt me!" the Lord knew better, and did not believe you!

Riches are a benefit to some, not to all; to a race of men, not to every man of the race. We say, "God pity the poor!" But Christ pitied the rich and rather blessed the poor. And between the two, the rich are likely to have the hardest time in reaching the kingdom. Being rich is not the same as being happy. Happine s consists not in the ability to buy all you want—no man ever had that—but in having such control over your wants, that you can always bring them within your ability. Riches and poverty are comparative terms. Every one here is rich compared with the beggar that shivers at his door, and we are all poor compared with the Rothchilds. And every one here is rich who has all he needs, compared with him whose greed always exceeds his gains. Oh, if we could only see what the Lord has spared us from becoming, we would no doubt render thanks to Him for our poverty.

There is a benefit and blessedness in tears. It is such a short step between sorrow and laughter. H-A-Ha! is the exclamation of joy. A-H-Ah! that of sorrow, and the difference between them is only the transposition of one letter. And during the year how often, how suddenly, has that letter been transposed!

Seneca says, "that man is unhappy who has never known affliction." And David said affliction was good for him. "Sorrow is better than laughter," if you measure it by the good it does. Most men are like Mr. Dombey," some one has said, "hard, cold, baked to a crust by the hot glare of success." We must be softened, and sweetened by bitter tears. We must learn how to value blessings by their losses. We must learn how to sympathize, by wanting sympathy. And the tears you have shed, tears over great mistakes; tears over terrible losses; tears over physical infirmities, and spiritual weaknesses; tears over the green grave where half your heart is buried; tears over the white face in the coffin where the other half is sleeping; tears that have fallen as the rain drops do from the blossoms and branches during a summers shower,—among all these tear God has scattered the perfume of his blessing,

"All hearts are better made by ill
As odors crushed are sweeter still."

A distinguished Senator, after he had buried his child, finding an old worsted shoe, thrust it into his bosom where for years he carried it next to his grieved heart. Never imitate him! Afflictions while they create misery and pain, are not meant to perpetuate them. "Forget the things that are behind! Get an inspiration from them and then press forward! Let us thank God for tears, but not by crying! We must all die, and be as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again," said the widow of Tekoa, but remember brethren the moral attached to this by F. W. Robertson, "let us not stop too long to weep over spilt water!"

3, Let me hurriedly mention some specific benefits which call for devout thanksgiving. There are benefits peculiar to us as individuals. We have to thank God for reason. Why do we not in gaudy dress, make the prison ring with our idiotic laugh? We have to thank Him for life spared. We have been to the funerals of many, the world seemingly has needed more than ourselves, yet they have been taken and we have been left. We have to thank Him for the use of our limbs. We have not been crippled or maimed for life by some falling timber. The lame man at the Gate Beautiful, when first he could stand alone, ran and leaped and praised God, so grateful was he for the restoration of his limbs, but we have never lost the use of ours, and "what have we rendered unto the Lord for all His benefits toward us?"

There are benefits of the home for which we should be grateful. Home is more than a house to live in. Home is where your parents are or have been. And living or dead, you ought to thank God, for them. Home is where our wives and children are. Like arrows in battle, so thick have been life's dangers about our little ones. Are they frolicking in the house to day? Thank God then who keeps the sparrows, children and yours! Do you miss them to-day? Last night your family separated for sleep. We fall asleep in Christ and separate for the night—thank God then for the morn coming when we shall sit down together in the kingdom. Our wives, thank God for them. Once they were sweethearts, and they ought to be still. We should treat them as if they were! That which sweetens home is the heart of our wives, and we ought to be thankful for them! Some homes have been pillaged for plunder; others ravaged by fire; others darkened by pestilence and death; others sold under the Sheriff's hammer. A black wagon, grey horses, and a long procession, have been seen before many homes. Ours seem to have been built on a rock, others on the sand. And "what have we rendered unto the Lord for all his benefits toward us."

Consider the benefits of our business life. Many strike success in business from their catalogue of mercies. Some believe in luck. If business is good, that is good luck. If a failure, that is bad luck. They don't thank God much, or themselves much! They thank luck. But just what kind of a creature luck is—whether a Darwinian monad or a geologic Zeuglodon—I don't know! I do know that the only luck the most of us have is the luck of rising early, and toiling late and working hard. Others believe in God a little, and in luck a little, but in shrewdness and business tact a good deal more. That is to say, success is regulated by intelligence and not by Providence. Let us see! Have we not often worked hard and failed. Have we not often done our best, and made less than when we did nothing? You cannot trace every dollar you have made back to your own endeavor. All who are shrewd and perservering do not succeed. God has given you health to make money. If he had put you on your back or stood in your way what would have all your sharpness have amounted to? God has given us the power to make money and the opportunity at any rate. Business is not a lottery wheel, with chance like a blind man, drawing out tickets, and giving to one and another a lucky number. God is "the author of every good and perfect gift." "In Him we live and move and have our being." And for both success and failure in business we should thank God, for the one may be as great a blessing as the other. And what have you rendered unto the Lord for all His benefits toward you?

There may be some unnoticed stranger here, disconsolate and sad because he has so little occasion for thanksgiving. Once he had days of thanksgiving. But the old home tead has been torn down, and mother and father have moved off to the churchyard, and the children are scattered, as the wind scatters the leaves when they fall. His own home is plain and cheerless. Work is scarce. The children are sick. And the lone wife that waits for his return to-day has a heart as heavy as his own. Never mind, stranger!

You have your mother's Bible. Thank God for that! You have Christ beside you, the world all about you, and God and Heaven over you! If you cannot find much in the past or in the present to inspire your heart, look up stranger! and thank God for that which is to come! No matter if all the world leave you, God will be more than all the world to you, and with Christ here and glory hereafter, you have reason enough to be thankful. "And what have *you* rendered unto the Lord for all his benefits toward you?"

And now *what* shall we render unto the Lord? What shall I render says the prosperous rich man? My debt is heavy, I admit. My health for years has been good. My wife and children have been spared. My business has been successful! Somehow this obligation must be tallied, and out comes his check for fifty, or a hundred dollars! Put it back! The Lord won't have it!

A husband says to his wife: "Wife, you and I were never meant for each other. I am gay and brilliant. You are sedate and pious. I cannot love you. Here are horses and wagons. Here is this beautiful home. Live here till you die. Pray for me now and then! I must be gone!"

Will that satisfy her? Can gifts be a substitute for love? She don't want his money! *She wants him.*

God wants you! Your money, your good works while they may express your love never can be a substitute for it God wants your heart! What shall we render? Ourselves! God has a right to that. He gave himself for us, let us give ourselves to him! Our gift is not equal to his and never can be, but bless God! *for Christ's sake it will do!*

Go to your homes! Once more gather around the loaded tables! Be merry! Cover up the *vacant* chairs! Remember the poor! And then "take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord."